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Juno Beach D-Day, 6 June 1944

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JUNO BEACH

D-DAY, 6 JUNE 1944

Doug Hester, a Canadian with the Queen's Own Rifles, later recalled approaching the well-defended beach. *"About 500 yards out, they had us in their sites of their small arms and began shooting. When the craft got into shallower water, the Royal Marines lowered the door. The three in front of me including Doug Reed were hit and killed. By luck I jumped out between bursts into their rising blood. Cold and soaking wet, I caught up to Gibby...the first burst went through his back pack. He turned his head grinning at me and said, 'that was close, Dougie.'...the next burst killed him."* Taken from The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Regimental Museum and Archives.



On D-Day, the primary Allied objective was to create a foothold in Western Europe, which had been under Nazi occupation since 1940. More than 14,000 Canadians from the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division and 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade participated in the landing invasion and their target was a stretch of beach code-named 'Juno'.

In the face of strong German resistance, the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division made it further inland than any other Allied force, breaking through the "Atlantic Wall" (the first line of German coastal defenses).

The price for storming Juno Beach was high: 340 Canadians dead, 574 wounded and 47 captured. Thousands more would die in the months that followed, as Canadian and Allied soldiers fought to liberate Europe.

